KANGAROO

D. H. LAWRENCE

EDITED BY
BRUCE STEELE

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011–4211, USA
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, VIC 3166, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

http://www.cambridge.org

First published in paperback 2001

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data

Lawrence, D. H. (David Herbert), 1885–1930.
Kangaroo / D. H. Lawrence: edited by Bruce Steele.
p. cm. – (The Cambridge edition of the letters and works of D. H. Lawrence)
I. Steele, Bruce. II. Title.
III. Series: Lawrence, D. H. (David Herbert), 1885–1930. Works. 1979.
PR6023.A93K35 1994
813'.912–dc20 93-31877

ISBN 0 521 38455 9 hardback
ISBN 0 521 00711 9 paperback

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Lawrence and Australia

D. H. Lawrence was in Australia for one hundred days in 1922. With his wife Frieda he arrived at Fremantle, Western Australia, from Colombo aboard the *R.M.S. Orsova*, on Thursday 4 May. They left Australia on the *Tahiti* from Sydney, New South Wales, on the morning of Friday 11 August bound for San Francisco and ultimately Taos, New Mexico. Like his sojourn with his American painter friends Earl and Achsah Brewster in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), which he described to Mabel Dodge Sterne as a 'detour', Lawrence's three-month stay in Australia was in one sense an interruption in his journey eastwards from Italy to America. Disillusioned with Europe after the bitterness of the First World War, he felt the need to escape. At Mabel Sterne's insistent invitation, he had decided to visit New Mexico and its Indian culture: 'I will come to the Indians, yes', he told her. 'But only via the East. There is something will not let me sail west for America.'[1] The heat and humidity of Ceylon soon proved unbearable and now Australia stood between Lawrence and his destination. A fortunate meeting on board ship from Naples had led to an invitation to visit Western Australia. Lawrence now took up the offer, but booked his passage through to Sydney on the east coast, facing America.

Ceylon, which Lawrence grew to detest because of its climate and what he perceived as its softness, affected his health and well-being (iv. 239). Although he worked hard on his translations from the Sicilian writer Giovanni Verga,[2] he had found little to inspire new work of his own. By contrast, Australia became more than just a detour. The ambivalence he felt at first towards the country and its people eventually and, it seems, quite suddenly overcame his initial reluctance to write anything more than letters. During his short visit he wrote *Kangaroo* with astonishing speed, and in 1923

[1] *Letters*, iv. 181. (Subsequent references to *Letters*, i–iv in the text are given by volume and page.) Mabel Dodge Sterne, a wealthy American patroness of the arts, had invited DHL to Taos in the belief that he was the writer to do justice to the landscape and the Indian culture.

[2] DHL finished translating *Mastro-don Gesualdo* (1889) and started *Novelle Rusticane* (1883) by Giovanni Verga (1840–1922), to be published in 1923 and 1925, the latter as *Little Novels of Sicily*.

was to complete *The Boy in the Bush*. *Kangaroo*, with its original plot, and *The Boy in the Bush*, a reworking of another writer's novel, are both imbued with the spirit of place. Australia, and his own mixed feelings towards it, exercised a strong fascination on Lawrence. He found it quite foreign, but familiar in that it was an English-speaking part of the British Empire. The bush was beautiful and endlessly fascinating, yet it held an indefinable menace which aroused in him an uncanny fear. The people, outwardly free from many of the constraints of Europe, seemed spiritually 'barren' – 'Australia is liberty gone senile – gone almost imbecile' (iv. 246). They were overwhelmingly friendly yet he did not want to become friends with them (iv. 241, 280). 'One could never make a novel out of these people, they haven't got any insides to them, to write about', Lawrence declared on 26 May. Despite this ambivalence, perhaps because of it, just three days later he had decided 'to try to write a romance' and before the week was out had begun *Kangaroo* (iv. 246–7, 251).

Lawrence's first Australian encounters had been with homeward-bound passengers on the *R.M.S. Osterley* between Naples and Colombo. 'I spend the day talking small-talk with Australians on board – rather nice people...', he wrote after ten days at sea (iv. 208). A day later, he noted his growing sense of the country: 'The people on board are mostly simple Australians. I believe Australia is a good country, full of life and energy...If we don't want to go on living in Ceylon I shall go to Australia if we can manage it' (iv. 213). Among these 'simple Australians' was Anna Jenkins with whom the Lawrences were quickly on close and happy terms. Widowed some five years earlier, she was a well-to-do, lively and somewhat eccentric lady of almost fifty. She told them much about her native state, Western Australia, and offered them accommodation in Perth. After two weeks in Ceylon, Lawrence wrote to her (28 March): 'My mind turns towards Australia. Shall we really come and try West?...Tell me if you think we *should* like W. Australia – if not we'll go straight to Sydney' (iv. 218). About two weeks later, and before he received her reply, Lawrence had booked passages for 24 April to Sydney on the *Orsova*, intending to stop only a few days in the West.

He reported little of the ten-day voyage to Perth in his letters. Undoubtedly he 'small-talked' with more returning Australians. He became friendly with John Elder Walker, a Scot, and his wife Dolores, who were considering emigration to Australia or New Zealand from northern India. For some years after the voyage he corresponded with the Walkers, who invited him to stay with them near Darjeeling if ever he came to India. During the voyage, Walker and Lawrence talked about India, Indian politics and socialism – subjects on which Walker, a self-educated railway engineer,

was well informed and could speak eloquently if loquaciously.[3] This meeting may have informed the several references to India and its politics in *Kangaroo*.

In Western Australia Lawrence was received as a great writer and lionised to a degree he found uncomfortable. It is perhaps significant that he wrote nothing more than letters there. He did, however, meet two writers who were to be important to him later. Mollie Skinner, at whose guest-house he stayed in Darlington outside Perth, had written the partly fictional *Letters of a V.A.D.* based on her experience as a Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse in India during the War. Lawrence read it with interest and encouraged her to write 'The House of Ellis' which he in turn was to rewrite as *The Boy in the Bush*.[4] In Perth itself he met William Siebenhaar, a civil servant of Dutch extraction with literary pretensions, whose anarchic political views had led to his suspension from the government service in 1916 on a charge of disloyal conduct:[5] he had been accused of associating with the 'Industrial Workers of the World' whose policies and activities were considered treasonable (see Explanatory note on 90:15). While his own recollections of his meetings with Lawrence affirm only that their talk was exclusively literary, it is likely that the conversations ranged more widely. They had each suffered harassment by the authorities during the First World War, Siebenhaar because of his part-German ancestry, Lawrence because of his German wife, and both men because of their unorthodox political views. Of all the people Lawrence met in Australia, Siebenhaar is the most likely to have read his 'Democracy' essays published in a Dutch journal *The Word* in 1919, a knowledge attributed to the character Kangaroo in the novel. This publication was strongly pacifist and socialist in character and, being printed in several languages, was international in its readership.[6] Siebenhaar gave Lawrence copies of his two

[3] The Walkers did eventually settle in Australia in 1925. Although DHL's letters were later destroyed, he sent them copies of his works and an inscribed copy of *Sea and Sardinia* has survived. The Walkers sent DHL an illustrated book on the Darjeeling railway, repeating their invitation to visit India and expressing distaste at the crudity of Australia (information from DHL's niece Joan King). See Bruce Steele, 'D. H. Lawrence and J. Elder Walker: An Indian Connection', *Journal of the D. H. Lawrence Society*, iv (1987–8), 63–6.

[4] See *The Boy in the Bush* ed. Paul Eggert (Cambridge, 1990), pp. xxv–xxxvii. For the probability that DHL took details both from Mollie Skinner's *Letters of a V[oluntary] A[id] D[etachment nurse]*, and from her brother Jack, a returned serviceman, for Jack Callcott, see Explanatory notes on 18:3 and 24:21.

[5] William (or Willem) Siebenhaar (1863–1937) emigrated to Western Australia in 1891 where he became Deputy Registrar General and Deputy Government Statistician. See Naomi Segal, *Who and What was Siebenhaar* (Perth, 1988). His memoir of DHL is in Nehls, iii. 104–12.

[6] The nature of its editorial principles probably accounts for Somers's allusion to 'that absurd international paper', perhaps for Kangaroo's benefit, as being run by 'spies and shady people'

published works – *Dorothea: A Lyrical Romance in Verse* [1909] and *Sentinel Sonnets* (Melbourne, 1919), of which he was co-author with Alfred Chandler. Although, after a brief perusal, Lawrence ignominiously consigned both volumes to the Southern Ocean (iv. 251), something in the man's idealistic views or even in the turgid nature lyricism of *Dorothea*, with its passages of political criticism and idealism, could well have sown seeds in Lawrence's mind. He seems, moreover, to have used some of Siebenhaar's physical features for the Labour leader Willie Struthers, while Somers's lunch with Ben Cooley (Kangaroo) in chapter VI may have had its origin in a lunch with Siebenhaar at the Savoy Hotel in Perth.[7]

Unable to find a suitable house, and deciding that the West was an uncongenial place to settle, the Lawrences left on the next ship to Sydney, the *R.M.S. Malwa*. They sailed from Fremantle on 18 May and, after calling at Adelaide, and at Melbourne overnight on Empire Day (24 May), arrived in Sydney early on the morning of Saturday 27 May. They spent only the weekend in the city, being once more unable to find satisfactory, affordable accommodation. On Monday 29 May they went by train to the South Coast town of Thirroul about forty miles from Sydney. By 6 p.m., with one month's rent paid in advance, they were settled in 'Wyewurk', a bungalow on the very edge of the Pacific Ocean.[8] The next day in a postscript to Robert Mountsier, his New York agent, Lawrence wrote: 'I am going to try to write a romance – or begin one – while I'm here and we are alone'.[9] The day before

(110:22–4). For DHL's own political radicalism in the later part of the War and after, see *Letters*, iii. 3–8.

[7] *Letters*, iv. 241. See Explanatory notes on 107:40 and 193:2. Though finding Siebenhaar something of a bore (*Letters*, v. 538), DHL kept in touch with him and was instrumental in the publication of his translation (New York, 1927) of the Dutch novel *Max Havelaar* (1860) by Multatuli (Eduard Douwes Dekker, 1820–87), and wrote an introduction (reprinted in *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. E. D. McDonald, 1936, pp. 236–9).

[8] It is not certain how DHL decided on Thirroul. The low winter rentals in a seaside resort would have been an incentive, and the agent of 'Wyewurk' advertised in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Saturdays. A newspaper advertisement or a tip from a casual conversation seems the most likely means. See Davis 30ff. Frieda's account, in "*Not I, But the Wind...*" (Santa Fe, 1934), p. 136, that they got off the train when they saw a place they liked, while disarming in its spontaneity, is uncharacteristic of DHL. On the other hand, her times (arriving Thirroul 4 p.m., in the house by 6 p.m.) are convincing. Trains from Sydney (departing 2 p.m.) took up to two hours for the journey.

[9] *Letters*, iv. 247. DHL's use of 'romance' to describe his proposed novel is the first of several links between *Kangaroo* and his essays on American literature begun in 1917. In Taos at the end of 1922, immediately after completing his revision of *Kangaroo*, he rewrote them for *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923). In his essay (November–December 1922) on Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, DHL recalls himself seeing an albatross (cf. 153:39–40, 169:31 and 329:27) in the Southern Ocean en route to Sydney. At the time, this experience may

his arrival in Sydney, he had said: 'I shall try New South Wales, to see if I want to stop there and write a novel. If I don't, I shall set off across the Pacific. . .' (iv. 246). Yet less than a week before that, evidently enjoying the shipboard life, he had written: 'I'm not working – don't want to – . . .' (iv. 244). For some reason it was only on this last stage of his journey that his 'Muse, dear hussy' was preparing to unveil her face (iv. 243).

Kangaroo is in many respects thinly disguised autobiography. It is clear from a comparison with Lawrence's letters that the characters R. L. and Harriett Somers are mostly, but not at all times, virtually identical with D. H. and Frieda Lawrence. In general it is the Somers–Lawrence experience of Australia which drives the novel. Uncritical emphasis, especially within Australia, on this pervasive autobiographical element has led to an assumption that the Somerses and the Lawrences are necessarily identical throughout: but Lawrence as narrator, for instance, is often sharply distinct from his character Somers and frequently critical of him and his views.[10] More incautiously, this autobiographical insistence has generated speculation, to a degree unparalleled for Lawrence's other novels, about 'originals' for the main characters and assertions that the political plot is factual. None of this speculation has brought convincing evidence that the characters, other than the Somerses, had single real-life originals. Whatever hints, chance meetings or memories may have infused their creation, there is nothing to show that Jack Callcott and Benjamin Cooley in particular are based on individuals whom Lawrence met in Australia and who confided in him as

have brought Melville to mind and set DHL thinking again about the forms of American romance and the novel. Much of what he had already written on the form of *Moby-Dick* could be applied to *Kangaroo*. See, e.g., the cut version printed in *The Symbolic Meaning*, ed. Armin Arnold (Arundel, 1962), pp. 235–50. For connections between the two novels, see Explanatory notes on 169:32 and 279:9. For the composition, publication history and versions of the essays in *Studies in Classic American Literature*, see the forthcoming Cambridge edition.

In his preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote that when 'a writer calls his work a Romance. . .he wishes to claim a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material'. In 1919 DHL, writing on Hawthorne, further defined romance as 'the utterance of the primary individual mind, in defiance of reason'. As a form, he located it between myth and legend on one side and 'pure art, where the sensual mind is harmonious with the ideal mind' on the other, adding that the forms may merge one into another (*The Symbolic Meaning*, pp. 138, 136). His defence of *Kangaroo* itself as a 'thought-adventure' (279:23) – since man is a 'thought-adventurer' (284:3) – is justifying its latitude of form in similar terms. See *The Symbolic Meaning*, pp. 134–8; see also 'The Future of the Novel' (1923) in *Study of Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge, 1985), pp. xlv, 154:13ff.

[10] Lawrence the novelist distinguishes his counterpart Somers as a poet and essayist (13:35–6). To Kangaroo he is Lovatt the poet (117:25), while Struthers wants his services as essayist and journalist (200:18–21).

they confide in Somers.[11] Since such claims have been advanced forcefully, leading to some controversy, and since Lawrence's novel has been used as historical evidence, it is necessary to examine in some detail such Australian influences on characters and plot as can be verified.

Kangaroo and the Diggers

Precise models for Lawrence's Digger Clubs and their Maggie squads have been sought industriously but without success. In some respects the clubs reflect activities of the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League (generally known as the RSL).[12] The League had branches in most towns and centres, including Thirroul where its meeting rooms were in the same building as the library which the Lawrences visited. While its activities were social, philanthropic and in some cases sporting, by 1922 the League was gaining conservative and nationalistic political influence. Lawrence's exact knowledge of its activities, even in Thirroul, is impossible to ascertain. Jack Callcott's admission to Somers, in a deleted passage in the manuscript, that the Diggers 'meet as returned soldiers clubs, chiefly athletics' suggests that he had some awareness of the League's activities.[13] But the novel's Digger Clubs were based only in general on the RSL: both were associations of returned servicemen whose members were to a greater or lesser extent becoming politically aware and politically active. The actual organisation of the Diggers, as Jack Callcott describes it, is of Lawrence's invention: its secrecy and the 'masters' and 'lodges' of the inner circles (93:5–15) suggest some influence from Freemasonry or occultist bodies.

The conflicting nature of Callcott's two accounts of the Digger Clubs and the Maggies (in chapters v and x) tends to support their being of Lawrence's ad hoc invention. Jack's two versions are not only at odds, but in each there are contradictions. He states, for instance, that in NSW there are 28,000 troops while the clubs from which they are recruited have a membership of

[11] In *D. H. Lawrence in Australia* (Melbourne, 1981), Robert Darroch suggested that the genesis of *Kangaroo* lay in DHL's meeting with certain political figures in Sydney; see also n. 25 below. The possible influence of Siebenhaar was discussed above. It has been suggested also that DHL met and conversed with Father Maurice O'Reilly on the *Malwa*. O'Reilly's literary interests and his controversial political stance in Sydney might have influenced aspects of the plot; see Explanatory note on 62:26.

[12] The name was subsequently changed to the Returned Servicemen's League, hence the widespread use of the initials RSL.

[13] MS p. 169. 'Digger' derives from the colloquial name for an Australian private soldier in the infantry in the First World War. It was later used of any returned soldier. See *The Australian National Dictionary*, ed. W. S. Ramson (Melbourne, 1988) and cf. Explanatory note on 32:7.

just over 5,000 (185:1ff). While at one point the Digger Clubs appear to form a quite complex national partisan political movement, at another they are of a totally new order, set apart from both socialist and conservative political parties (94:8). More conservative than not, they are primarily digger-based. These waywardnesses, deliberately vague perhaps, at most owe something to hearsay: returned servicemen were becoming politically involved and there were occasional urgings that they become more active, even along military lines. But when Lawrence later asked his American publisher Thomas Seltzer whether the Australian diggers might 'resent' anything in his novel,[14] it would seem that he was worried, not so much about having given away secret information, but that his fictional Digger Clubs might be taken as a caricature of the RSL, the real diggers and their actual political concerns. Having adopted their name, Lawrence was anxious that they should not be offended by his fictional Diggers. Such similarities as there were would not have extended to actual revolutionary intervention in government, like the *coup d'état* Jaz proposes to Somers (160:5–161:2). While such ideas doubtless could have been found in Australia in 1922, they would have been anathema to the RSL itself.[15]

The RSL was a pervasive force in Australia during the 1920s quite apart from its influence on government and party politics. Lawrence accurately registered, whether consciously or unconsciously, many effects of this force. Not confined to Jack's Digger movement, they can be readily seen in the images and the critique of Australian society which pervade *Kangaroo*. The Australian historian Russel Ward pertinently characterised the RSL of the immediate post-War period in terms reminiscent of the novel. The League, he wrote,

> did a great deal to make the values associated with. . .the 'old digger' dominant in the Australian community. Along with the virtues ascribed to the idealised digger – courage, loyalty, mateship and democratic levelling – went other less admirable characteristics. The stereotyped figure exhibited also tough, sardonic contempt for coloured people and foreigners generally, for minority views, for art, literature, culture and learning; and something not far from contempt – patronage disguised as

[14] See n. 33 below and p. xl. DHL was also concerned that the Australian government might take offence.

[15] The Sydney *Bulletin* on 19 January 1922, for instance, had carried an article entitled 'The Digger and Politics' which suggested that returned servicemen (the diggers), disaffected from both the National and Labor parties, should infiltrate the Labor machine and form their own party, but this is scarcely revolutionary. It is not known whether DHL read the article, but similar and sometimes more radical ideas were being expressed.

There is often confusion over the spelling of 'labour': the political party is the 'Australian Labor Party' and when in power the 'Labor Government', but references to workers or workers' movements generally use 'labour'. DHL always uses 'labour/Labour'.

chivalrous protectiveness – for 'good' women, and brutal disdain for 'bad' ones. He magnified 'male' virtues like decisiveness, directness, physical strength, and despised 'female' ones like thoughtfulness, gentleness, subtlety. The tone of most of the writing in the *Bulletin* or *Smith's Weekly* at this period exactly mirrors the prevailing ethos – levelling values, rough manners and philistine tastes as the outer form; conformity, conservatism and unquestioning Anglo-Australian patriotism as the inner content...

Moreover the League never felt any compunction about intervening openly against dissident left-wing political groups such as the Australian Communist Party, though most of them were, in law, bodies on a par with the Nationalist, Country or Labor parties...[16]

The last point has particular relevance to the political plot of the novel.

In common with many countries during the post-War years, Australia had its emergent conservative loyalist organisations. They had strong, but by no means exclusive, support from returned servicemen who resented what they perceived as any threat to the democracy for which they had fought. Their concern was primarily with the security of established society: only extremists would have imagined anything like a right-wing coup. These 'leagues' and 'alliances' had a high public profile, were led by former military officers and eminent citizens but were patronised by all classes. They proclaimed loyalty to the British Flag, Crown and Empire and to a democratic Australia within the Empire. They vehemently opposed those whom they perceived as revolutionaries, anarchists or subversives, especially those who publicly brandished the Communist red flag and professed international communism.[17] Thus the threatening stance and extravagant rhetoric of the Left brought an equally strong reaction from the Right.[18] If Labor Party extremists and Communists paraded under the red flag and preached revolution, conservatives were prepared to take action within the law (sometimes even outside it) to defend the Union Jack and the Empire. While Lawrence could have heard or read of the occasional violent clashes between the two sides in previous years, none actually occurred during his stay in Australia.

One quite prominent loyalist organisation in NSW was the 'King and

[16] *A Nation for a Continent*, revised edn (Melbourne, 1988), p. 141. The Communist Party of Australia had been formed in Sydney in October 1920.

[17] Not only Sunday platform orators in the Sydney Domain but even MPs like the controversial James Dooley (see note on 104:8) could say in the House: 'The red flag is the symbol of love and universal brotherhood...' (*Daily Telegraph*, 5 July 1922). The red flag bearing a hammer and sickle was the internationally recognised symbol of extreme socialism or communism.

[18] The newly appointed Minister for Justice in NSW, T. F. Ley, asserted: 'There are men who are aiming to bring about a general strike as a prelude to revolution' (quoted in 'The Revolution', *Sydney Mail*, 31 May 1922, p. 8).

Empire Alliance'. It had been formed in direct response to the May Day 'Flag Riot' in Sydney in 1920 when a Union Jack was publicly burned by extremists. By June 1922, however, despite its 10,000 membership, the Alliance was showing signs of decline, especially since the NSW Labor Government had been defeated by the conservative Nationalists in the March election. Again, Lawrence could have read of the Alliance's activities and propaganda in its monthly magazine, the *King and Empire*, or in newspapers, but there is no clear evidence that he did so. Nevertheless, the specifically propagandist meetings of the Diggers, to which Jack Callcott refers (184:26–37), are not dissimilar to the public rallies held by loyalist organisations. Meetings of this kind in Sydney and elsewhere were being held while Lawrence was at Thirroul.[19]

Assertions that there existed in mid-1922 a well-organised secret army behind this public front of loyalty have not been substantiated.[20] Although in 1920 and 1921 vigilante groups, largely of returned servicemen, had been able, at short notice, to muscle-in and break up 'disloyal' public meetings in Sydney and elsewhere, these were scarcely the activities of a secret army. The incidents were vividly reported by the newspapers. Lawrence's Diggers disrupting Struthers's socialist meeting (chap. XVI) could well be founded on accounts of violent, though less catastrophic, episodes in the two or three years before his arrival. These meeting-breakers in Sydney were loosely organised ad hoc bands: there was nothing to compare with the colourful black-and-white-uniformed Maggies with Kangaroo riding at their head (315:9–21). The flamboyant and well-publicised right-wing New Guard in NSW, to which the Maggies, trained by Colonel Ennis, (184:16–25), might be compared, did not come into existence until years after Lawrence left Australia.[21] If Lawrence had a model for the Maggies, it would have been the Fascist Blackshirts whose activities he had known in Italy. It is not fanciful to suggest that he grafted on to them whatever he may have known of the

[19] See, for instance, Explanatory note on 62:27. The only certain evidence of DHL's reading of newspapers besides the *Bulletin*, which he acknowledged, is documented in the Explanatory notes. He could, and probably did, gain information from chance conversations with individuals in and around Thirroul, and he had talked extensively with Australian fellow passengers, several of whom were military officers.

[20] An attempt to uncover the Old Guard, a 'secret army' alliance in NSW, allegedly extant after the War, but a decade before the emergence of the better-known New Guard, is in Andrew Moore, *The Secret Army and the Premier* (Sydney, 1989), pp. 12–73.

[21] For the New Guard and the later 1920s and 1930s, see Eric Campbell, *The Rallying Point* (Melbourne, 1965); Ward, *A Nation for a Continent*, pp. 193–4; and Moore, *The Secret Army*, chap. IV.

earlier violence in Sydney, together with the black-and-white plumage and the name of the Australian magpie, an aggressively territorial bird.[22]

It has been claimed that Kangaroo, the leader of the Diggers, is closely drawn from Major-General Sir Charles Rosenthal (1875–1954). As an officer in the First World War, he had inspired affection in his troops. In civilian life Rosenthal was an architect of some standing in Sydney; in March 1922 he had been elected Nationalist MP for Bathurst in the NSW parliament. He was also President of the King and Empire Alliance in NSW and an alderman of the City of Sydney. Despite assertions to the contrary, he did not closely match the physical description of Ben Cooley.[23] The first suggestion that Rosenthal might be the model for Kangaroo, for reasons other than his physical appearance, was made in 1968 by Don Rawson, who incorrectly implied *inter alia* that Rosenthal was Jewish.[24] This identification would have carried more conviction, and so be germane to the background of the political plot of *Kangaroo*, had it been established that Lawrence knew of Rosenthal and that Rosenthal was engaged in secret army activities, but there is no evidence for either proposition and strong presumption against both. Rawson's suggestion was nevertheless adopted and extensively pursued by Robert Darroch who alleged that Lawrence was actually approached by a secret political movement on his arrival in Sydney, that he several times met with its supposed leader, Rosenthal, and his associate in the King and Empire Alliance, Colonel W. J. R. Scott, and that much of the Somers–Kangaroo and Somers–Callcott material of the novel is reportage. This theory gained some credence; it has now been shown to be without foundation.[25]

[22] See 87:11–18, 184:16–20, and also Jeffrey Meyers, *D. H. Lawrence and the Experience of Italy* (Philadelphia, 1982), chap. VII, and the review of *Kangaroo* by R. S. Ross cited on p. lv. See also Explanatory note on 184:16.

[23] See especially 107:40–108:11. The most likely (non-Australian) models for aspects of Kangaroo's character, particularly his physical appearance, are indicated in the Explanatory note on 107:40.

[24] 'Political Violence in Australia', *Dissent* (Autumn 1968), 26–8.

[25] In addition to his *D. H. Lawrence in Australia*, Darroch has published the following articles: 'The mystery of Kangaroo and the Secret Army', *Australian*, 15 May 1976; 'So many of the best people join secret armies', *Australian*, 15 January 1977, pp. 21, 76; 'Lawrence in Australia: the plot thickens as the clues emerge', *Bulletin*, 20 May 1986, pp. 82–5; 'The Man who was Kangaroo', *Quadrant* (September 1987), 56–60. A few historians accepted his theory, among them Manning Clark, *A History of Australia* (Melbourne, 1987), vi.; Moore, *The Secret Army*, chap. II; Michael Cathcart, *Defending the National Tuckshop* (Melbourne, 1988). It has been challenged by David Ellis, 'Lawrence in Australia: The Darroch Controversy', *D. H. Lawrence Review*, xxi (1989), 167–74; Paul Eggert, 'Lawrence, The Secret Army and the West Australian Connexion', *Westerly*, xxvi (1982), 122–6; Steele; Davis; see also p. xxx below and Explanatory notes on 92:9 and 94:8.

If Lawrence used an individual Australian as model for Kangaroo in his role of highly-regarded military leader, it is most likely to have been General Sir John Monash (1865–1931). Monash was the most outstanding Australian general in the First World War, was Jewish, devoted to his troops, and the diggers loved him.[26] He was a graduate in engineering and (like Kangaroo) in law, a businessman and an administrator. He had received immense publicity in London in the months following the Armistice,[27] and, as a reader of newspapers, Lawrence could well have known of him even before he left England. He is likely to have heard more about Monash and his reputation from fellow passengers on the journey to Australia, from the Australian press and in Melbourne (Monash's home city) during the *Malwa*'s overnight stopover.

The best indication that Lawrence had knowledge of Monash is in the brief description of Emu (185:37–186:4), Kangaroo's counterpart in Victoria. The similarities are precise: a 'born handler of men', 'a very smart soldier', a 'mining expert'. Each could be applied to Monash, although 'very smart' is facetious understatement and 'Lieutenant Colonel' demotes him. In January 1921 Monash had been appointed Chairman of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria and was responsible for the planning and development of open-cut brown coal-mining to provide fuel for the generators. After the War, he retained an enormous popular following among ex-servicemen and his name was virtually a household word.[28] Like Emu, Monash had been disappointed in not being given a position in the post-War defence establishment, probably because he had not been a professional soldier. Together these likenesses suggest more than coincidence, and it is reasonable to presume that Lawrence used Monash for a few details of both Kangaroo and Emu.[29]

But concentration on this kind of 'fact' in *Kangaroo* has too often overlooked the nature of Lawrence's fiction and the *raison d'être* of his characters. Somers's involvement with leaders of the Diggers and the Socialists had its roots in Lawrence's intellectual and imaginative grappling with the claims of the right and the left in politics and the problem of the writer as activist – a problem which had preoccupied him at least since 1915. At the heart of *Kangaroo*, behind its Australian setting, there is an important stage in

[26] It could, of course, be maintained that if DHL had indeed heard of Rosenthal, also a much loved general, he assumed the name to be Jewish – as it frequently is.

[27] See Geoffrey Serle, *John Monash: A Biography* (Melbourne, 1982), esp. chaps. XIII and XIV.

[28] Ibid.

[29] The two heraldic beast-supporters in the Australian coat-of-arms; see also Explanatory note on 16:4.

Lawrence's argument with democracy, his response to both fascism and socialism and his search for a new life-form.

Particularly since 1917, these ideas had been strongly influenced by his reading of the American poet Walt Whitman, whom he greatly admired. From his earliest surviving essay on Whitman (1919), through his essays on 'Democracy' (1919) which use the poet as a reference point, in parts of 'Education of the People' (1918–20) and in *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1922),[30] Lawrence argued for a new order based on a transcendent relationship between men to replace what he saw as the power of an idealism which had reduced them to 'machine-units', particularly the ideal of love and benevolence.[31] Through Kangaroo and the fictional Digger movement, Lawrence sets and develops, in an imagined political action, a proposal he had made in his revision of *Fantasia of the Unconscious* only eight months before, acknowledging Whitman as its inspiration. In setting out his ideas on the education of young men, Lawrence had made an urgent plea that 'a great league of comrades' be set up 'all over America' to save it from the pervasive mental idealism which had made men incapable of realising themselves as living individual souls. He went on to specify an organisation for this American league of comrades: there would be small cell groups of comrades pledging loyalty and total obedience to a leader, groups of leaders pledged to a higher leader and so on across the nation. The comrades, while still boys, would undertake 'pure individualistic military training' as a preparation for 'a whole new way of life'.[32] In *Kangaroo* Lawrence transports and develops this embryonic programme, grafting it on to an imaginary Australian movement, itself based on the comradeship of returned servicemen (the 'diggers'), to test the idea in a political world.[33] When Somers encounters this

[30] Although *Fantasia of the Unconscious* was not published until October 1922, DHL had completed his final revision in October 1921. For the versions of DHL's essays on Whitman, see *Studies in Classic American Literature* (Cambridge, forthcoming). Part of the version cut for publication in 1921 is in *The Symbolic Meaning*, ed. Arnold, p. 254–64.

[31] Kangaroo states that Somers's essays on Democracy helped him formulate his enterprise (110:20). It could be said that DHL's essays on Democracy, and all that lay behind them, gave him a frame of reference for his novel and its ideas. In the Whitman essays, DHL argued that the love of comrades surpasses but does not replace marriage – a view expressed by his character Rupert Birkin in *Women in Love*, ed. David Farmer, Lindeth Vasey and John Worthen (Cambridge, 1987), 351:9–353:20. Both are subject to scrutiny in *Kangaroo*. While DHL's castigation of the Christian-inspired ideal of benevolence may owe something to Nietzsche (see Explanatory note on 138:21), his solution (see below) is very different.

[32] See Explanatory note on 92:9 and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, ed. Bruce Steele (Cambridge, forthcoming), chap. VII.

[33] DHL had described *Fantasia of the Unconscious* as his book for America. When writing *Kangaroo* in Australia, DHL could not have known that Thomas Seltzer, probably on grounds of its political sensitivity, had removed this passage. It has remained unpublished.

Whitmanesque doctrine translated into political action and embodied in the characters of Jack Callcott and Kangaroo, however, he, like Lawrence, finds it a betrayal of the comradeship of separate individuals which he sought. In his protestations of love for Somers and in his doctrine for Australia, Kangaroo is seeking to merge rather than create individuals; finally, Somers realises, he wants to impose his will and to enforce the old 'mechanistic' ideal of benevolence. This realisation revives Somers's fear of the evil idealism which motivated the masses in the War and he relives his own experience of it in a 'nightmare' (chap. XII). Far from Kangaroo's benevolent vision for the nation being the new 'life-form' that Somers hoped to find taking root in Australia, it is love by force and degenerates into the bloodthirsty violence of fascism (chap. XVI).[34]

Somers finds the slightly more attractive fraternal idealism of Willie Struthers no better; for, true to the political realities of his day, Lawrence allows Somers to be tempted by socialism as well as Kangaroo's quasi-fascist paternalism. He rejects this version of Whitman's democratic ideal too, and on similar grounds: 'political socialism. . .has been a great treacherous conspiracy against the generous heart of the people' (201:15–17).

It seems fortuitous that the novel in which these matters are debated should have been 'pitched in Australia' (iv. 257): an early reviewer pointed out that almost any country would have served Lawrence's theme.[35] Yet it is a fortunate accident that it should be Australia, for here Lawrence found the ultimate form of democracy (iv. 250), before he met the American variety that Whitman had celebrated with such gusto. While he acknowledged the freedom from the dead weight of European life (iv. 263–4), he was at best ambivalent about what he saw, at worst disillusioned. Nevertheless, it was in Europe, especially in Italy, that Lawrence witnessed vividly the post-War political upheavals and the violence between Fascists and Communists which he transposes to Australia in *Kangaroo*. The climactic riot between the Diggers and the socialists in *Kangaroo* had its anticipation at the end of his previous novel, *Aaron's Rod*, with its dramatic episode of bomb-throwing in

DHL had not seen the book when he was revising *Kangaroo* in Taos (see below p. xxxviii), but his agent may have alerted him to the deletions and to the political sensitivity of the ideas. If so this could well have added to DHL's anxiety that *Kangaroo* should not offend the Australian government (see p. xxv, above).

[34] Somers's rejection of Kangaroo and the Diggers can be matched with DHL's growing ambivalence towards Whitman which he expressed in the final version of his essay on the poet in November–December 1922, just a month or so after his revision of *Kangaroo*. See n. 30 above.

[35] Henry Seidel Canby; see p. lii below.

Florence.[36] So universal had these forces become in the wake of the First World War and the Russian Revolution of 1917, that Lawrence could not have been surprised – even if Somers was – to find similar political groupings in 'easy-going', 'democratic' Australia (260:13–21). He creates and magnifies a sense of subterranean violence ready to burst through the carefree surface of Australian life, and shows it erupting in the dramatic realism of the 'Row in Town'. So convincing is this episode that some readers have concluded that Lawrence must have been recording actual events.

Although he talked and, more importantly, listened to people, and read useful newspapers, his sense of the forces at work in Australian society did not derive from extensive, much less from fully informed, knowledge of current Australian politics.[37] The rate at which he composed *Kangaroo* would alone have left him little or no time for the extensive reading, travelling and meetings required, even had he been so disposed.[38] Typically, he made the fullest use of quite minimal knowledge, of his brief direct experience and of his penetrating powers of observation and intuition. He used thriftily what he gleaned, drawing it into his own previous experience during the War and afterwards in Italy. The result is a persuasive impression of the social climate of Australia in 1922 with a convincing air of authenticity. But while *Kangaroo* is Lawrence's novel of Australia, it is also the record of a stage in his globe-circling pilgrimage (348:2–6) in search of a new life-form.

People and the sense of place

'Here I have not let anybody know I am come – I don't present any letters of introduction – there isn't a soul on this side of Australia knows I am here, or knows who I am' (iv. 259). It was not that he concealed his personal identity from casual acquaintances or from tradespeople, but that he did not want nor did he allow himself to be recognised professionally as he had been in Perth. Even the agent from whom he rented the house in Thirroul said that she did not know he was a writer until after he had left.[39] In the 'small-talk' sense, he

[36] See *Aaron's Rod*, ed. Mara Kalnins (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 282–5. For another account of DHL's Italian experience see *Movements in European History*, ed. Philip Crumpton (Cambridge, 1989), 262:28–263:8. Although postdating *Kangaroo*, this 'Epilogue' is clearly related to the preoccupations of the novel. See also pp. xxvii–xxviii and n. 22 above.

[37] Katherine Susannah Pritchard pointed out DHL's ignorance of fact in the local Australian political scene (Nehls, ii. 155–6); for Pritchard see Explanatory note on 320:24; cf. DHL's admission to P. R. Stephensen, p. xliv below. See also Michael Wilding, '"A New Show": The Politics of *Kangaroo*', *Southerly*, xxx (1969), 20–40. For events which may have influenced the 'Row in Town' see Explanatory notes on 307:31 and 314:33.

[38] See p. xxxvi below and cf. Ellis, 'Lawrence in Australia', p. 170.

[39] Nehls, ii. 144.